BOROUGH OF WISBECH
HC 4444 (1) WISBECH

# Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1955

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Wisbech.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting to you my report on the general health of the Borough for the past year, ending 31st December, 1955.

## General Statistics.

Area 4,666 acres.

Estimated resident population mid-1955, 17,160

Sum realised by a penny rate, £337.

Number of inhabited houses, about 5,281.

Rateable value, £91,175

## Live Births.

| | *Total* | *M.* | *F.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimate | 271 | 132 | 139 |
| Illegitimate | 29 | 14 | 15 |

Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population mid-1955, 17·47.

## Still Births.

| | *Total* | *M.* | *F.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimate | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Illegitimate | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 19·67.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deaths | 314 | 172 | 142 |

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population, 18·29.

## Deaths From Puerperal Causes:—

| | *Deaths* | *Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births* |
|---|---|---|
| Puerperal sepsis | 0 | 0 |
| Other puerperal causes | 0 | 0 |

## Death Rate of Infants under 1 Year of Age:—

| | |
|---|---|
| All infants per 1,000 live births | 20·00 |
| Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births | 18·45 |
| Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births | 34·48 |
| Deaths from cancer (all ages) | 44 |
| Deaths from measles (all ages) | 0 |
| Deaths from whooping cough (all ages) | 0 |
| Deaths from diarrhoea (under two years of age) | 0 |
| Deaths from motor vehicle accidents | 4 |

The comparable figures for towns of approximately the same size are as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Birth rate per 1,000 | 16·2 |
| Death rate per 1,000 | 15·4 |
| Death rate of infants under 1 year of age | 28·4 |

In the Borough there is a School Clinic, a Tubercular Clinic, two General Hospitals, a Hospital for chronic aged and sick female patients, and an Orthopaedic Clinic held weekly at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital. Infectious Diseases are accommodated at Peterborough and East Dereham Isolation Hospitals.

Excellent Motor Ambulance facilities are available, whilst Diphtheria Antitoxin and Pathological and Bacteriological examinations are provided when necessary.

## Public Health Staff.

The duties connected with this are carried out by the M.O.H. who is a part-time officer, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, the Borough Senior and Additional Sanitary Inspectors, all full-time officers, together with those of the Council's employees who are specially needed for sanitary work.

## Infant and Child Welfare.

The Infant and Child Welfare Clinic in Norwich Road is held weekly on Friday afternoons, and is well attended.

### Welfare Attendances for 1955

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of children who attended during the year | 356 |
| Number of children who attended for the first time, and who at their first attendance were under 1 year | 177 |
| Number of children attending born in 1955 | 154 |
| Number of children attending born in 1954 | 114 |
| Number of children attending born 1953-1950 | 88 |
| Total number of attendances made by children during the year. | |
| 1. Under 1 year of age | 2143 |
| 2. 1 year of age but under 2 years | 404 |
| 3. 2 years of age but under 5 years | 671 |
| Total | 3218 |

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Number of children under the age of 5 years who have completed a full course of immunisation against Diphtheria during the year ... 144

Between the ages of 5-9 years ..... 155

HOUSING.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS.

Applicants on waiting list at end of year ..... 600

BUILDING.

Houses completed in 1955:—

Wisbech Corporation ..... 46

Private Enterprise ..... 29

Total post-war houses completed and occupied ..... 701

Work in hand:—

Wisbech Corporation ..... 95

Private Enterprise ..... 25

WATER.

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Appearance | Clear and bright |
| pH. | 7·3 |
| Alkalinity | 195 |
| Chlorine as Chlorides (p.p.m.) | 26·7 |
| Chlorine (free) (p.p.m.) | Nil |
| Hardness Carbonate (p.p.m.) | 195 |
| Hardness Non-Carbonate (p.p.m.) | 67 |
| Total Hardness (p.p.m.) | 262 |

BACT. COUNT PER MILLION.

| | |
|---|---|
| 48 hours @ 37° C. | No counts |
| 72 hours @ 22° C. | No counts |

BACT. COLI PER 100 MILLION.

| | |
|---|---|
| Presumptive | Absent |
| Confirmatory | Absent |
| Most probable Number | — |

REMARKS.

The above results indicate water of the highest standard of bacterial purity, pure and wholesome in character and suitable as a public supply for drinking and domestic purposes.

EXTENSIONS.

Housing Sites:—

3″ pipe ..... 190 yards

4″ pipe ..... 89 yards

6″ pipe ..... 345 yards

Renewals:—

3″ pipe ..... 23 yards

4″ pipe ..... 205 yards

Agricultural Extensions:—

3″ pipe ..... 687 yards

Other Extensions:—

3″ pipe ..... 276 yards

4″ pipe ..... 17 yards

New connections to the mains ..... 125

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 AND 1948.

PART I OF THE ACT

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

| *Premises* | *Number on Register* | *Inspections* | *Written Notices* | *Occupiers Prosecuted* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority | 28 | 22 | — | — |
| 2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority | 103 | 47 | — | — |
| 3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) | — | — | — | — |
| Total | 131 | 69 | — | — |



BRITISH MUSEUM 66 OCT

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Number of cases in which defects were found

| Particulars | Found | Remedied | Referred To H.M. Inspector | Referred By H. M. Inspector | Number of Prosecutions instituted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Want of cleanliness ..... | — | — | — | — | — |
| Overcrowding | — | — | — | — | — |
| Unreasonable temperature ... | — | — | — | — | — |
| Inadequate ventilation ..... | — | — | — | — | — |
| Ineffective drainage of floors | — | — | — | — | — |
| Sanitary conveniences— | | | | | |
| (*a*) insufficient | 1 | 1 | — | — | — |
| (*b*) unsuitable or defective ... | 1 | 1 | — | — | — |
| (*c*) not separate for sexes... | — | — | — | — | — |
| Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork) | — | — | — | — | — |
| Total | 2 | 2 | — | — | — |

NOTIFICATIONS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

| Age periods | New cases Pulmonary M. | New cases Pulmonary F. | New cases Non-Pulmonary M. | New cases Non-Pulmonary F. | Deaths Pulmonary M. | Deaths Pulmonary F. | Deaths Non-Pulmonary M. | Deaths Non-Pulmonary F. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 45 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 55 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 65 and over | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

I remain, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

H. LESLIE GROOM, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

*Medical Officer of Health.*

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

| | Total cases Notified | Deaths |
|---|---|---|
| Smallpox ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Scarlet Fever ..... | 1 | 0 |
| Diphtheria ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Pneumonia ..... | none reported | 31 |
| Erysipelas ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Puerperal Pyrexia ..... | 5 | 0 |
| Enteric Fever ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Measles ..... | 256 | 0 |
| Acute Encephalitis ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Whooping Cough ..... | 157 | 0 |
| Paratyphoid Fever ..... | 1 | 0 |
| Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..... | 0 | 0 |
| Acute Poliomyelitis ..... | 7 | 0 |
| Food poisoning ..... | 1 | 0 |
| Dysentery ..... | 14 | 0 |

# Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector for the Year 1955

Public Health Department,
Albion Place,
Nene Quay,
Wisbech.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Wisbech

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1955, being my thirty-sixth Annual Report. This report, as usual, again appears mainly in summary form and covers the work of my department in the interests of the general health of the Borough.

## Public Health Acts.

Inspections numbering 284 have been made of premises where matters remedial under the Public Health Acts generally existed. In two cases only was it necessary to report matters to the Public Health Committee for statutory action where informal action had failed, the whole of the remaining cases brought the desired results after informal action by preliminary notice or interviews. Details of the work executed appear in the summaries at the end of this report.

We are again indebted to the Manager of the Wisbech and District Water Board for monthly reports of examinations of samples of drinking water from the Board's Supply. In every case the results have shown a water of the highest standard of bacterial purity.

## Housing.

Housing conditions in the Borough have not altered substantially since my last annual report. Repairs have been executed to many old properties so as to render them wind- and water-tight, but much work of this kind, however, is still needed in order to cope with general deterioration. In this respect, repairs have been carried out at 58 houses in the Borough, 8 houses were reported as repairable where formal action was taken and 2 houses were considered to be incapable of repair at a reasonable cost, the latter were subsequently demolished.

The survey of the town which was commenced last year in order to obtain an estimate of the number of substandard houses that could be considered for clearance, was completed by the end of March. This survey revealed a total figure of 439 houses for consideration by the Council, 120 of these were Council owned properties, chiefly in the Horsefair area. These 120 houses with an addition of 213 privately owned houses formed the five year programme for clearance, leaving 106 privately owned houses forming the future programme. Later in the year three batches of properties comprising 21 houses were included in Clearance Areas.

## Infectious Diseases.

The town has again been very free from infectious disease. As each case has occurred the house has been visited to ascertain the source and the usual disinfection has taken place after removal to hospital or recovery.

## Factories and Workshops.

One factory has been provided with sufficient sanitary accommodation and at one other factory defective accommodation was repaired.

A certificate of means of escape in case of fire was issued for one factory.

## Common Lodging Houses.

There are two Common Lodging Houses in the Borough, registered to receive 45 male lodgers. These premises have been inspected periodically and have been found to be carried on in a satisfactory manner.

## Meat and Food.

Meat and Food along with Housing are the two main duties falling to the lot of your inspectors. Slaughterhouse inspections are made daily and also evening visits when necessary for the examination of carcases. The amount of food condemned is shown in the following summaries.

The return of the seven slaughterhouses from Ministry control to private use had become settled by the end of the year, only one of these slaughterhouses was in need of immediate alteration. The deadweight certification of pigs remained in operation until April and up to that date 373 pigs had been examined and certified. From that date onwards the whole-time grader of the Ministry of Agriculture took on these duties. The transfer of these duties was a welcome relief, as the extra duties entailed in the examination and certification of these pigs put an undue strain on the time at the disposal of your inspectors.

From October to December, a large number of carcases of pork, in addition to those supplied for local consumption, were sent to the wholesale markets, which increased the total number of pigs killed for the year to 10,821. These and all the remaining carcases of all sorts received inspection.

FRESH MEAT CONDEMNED.

| | |
|---|---|
| Whole Carcases of Beef | 16 |
| Part Carcases of Beef | 10 |
| Whole Carcases of Pork | 31 |
| Part Carcases of Pork | 78 |
| Whole Carcases of Mutton | 3 |
| Whole Carcases of Veal | 5 |
| Ox Offals (complete) | 3 |
| Ox Livers (complete) | 44 |
| Part Ox Livers | 16 |
| Ox Heads and Tongues | 8 |
| Pigs Livers | 5 |
| Pigs Plucks | 60 |
| Sheeps Livers | 2 |

Total weight of Fresh Meat condemned:—
7 tons 19 cwts. 22 lbs.

CAUSES FOR CONDEMNATION.

| | lbs. |
|---|---|
| Tuberculosis | 8,113 |
| Inflammation | 1,947 |
| Dropsy | 1,659 |
| Septicoemia | 880 |
| Congestion | 665 |
| Bruised | 643 |
| Cirrhosis | 595 |
| Moribund | 584 |
| T. Pericarditis | 403 |
| Pyoemia | 390 |
| Fevered | 386 |
| Sapreomia | 383 |
| Emaciation | 221 |
| Swine Fever | 212 |
| Fracture | 160 |
| Erysipelas | 153 |
| Abscess | 121 |
| C. Angioma | 113 |
| Degeneration | 36 |
| Tumour | 30 |
| Actinomycosis | 30 |
| Immature | 25 |
| Necrosis | 22 |
| Mastitis | 16 |
| Parasites | 13 |
| Rash | 10 |
| Pneumonia | 8 |
| Cystic Kidney | 7 |
| Urticaria | 5 |
| | 17,830 |

OTHER FOOD CONDEMNED.

| | |
|---|---|
| Tins | 624 |
| Jars | 4 |
| Packets | 3 |
| Boxes | 1 |
| Bottles | 2 |
| Crabs | 42 |
| | lbs. |
| Bacon | 189 |
| Ham | 35 |
| Cooked Meats | 16 |
| Sausages | 45 |
| Fish | 190 |
| Cheese | 80 |
| Chicory | 20 |
| Fruit | 400 |
| Confectionery | 116 |
| Biscuits | 31 |
| Butter | 2 |
| Various | 1 |

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART.

| | Cattle excluding Cows | Cows | Calves | Sheep and Lambs | Pigs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number Killed | 1624 | 299 | 35 | 2254 | 10821 |
| Number inspected | 1624 | 299 | 35 | 2254 | 10821 |
| All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci: Whole carcases condemned | 6 | | 5 | 3 | 29 |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned | 69 | | — | 2 | 106 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected by disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci | 3·90% | | 14·16% | 0·22% | 1·25% |
| Tuberculosis only: Whole carcases condemned | 10 | | — | — | 2 |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned | 12 | | — | — | 37 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis | 1·14% | | — | — | 0·36% |
| Cysticercosis: Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned | — | | — | — | — |
| Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration | — | | — | — | — |
| Generalised and totally condemned | — | | — | — | — |

Total number of animals slaughtered 15,033

LICENCES.

Licences in force at 31st December, 1955:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Licences to slaughter or stun animals | 38 |
| Licences for Slaughterhouses | 7 |
| Licence for Knackers Yard | 1 |
| Licensed Gangmasters | 7 |
| Licensed Campers | 11 |
| Fellmongers Licence | 1 |
| Licences to keep Pet Shops | 3 |
| Common Lodging Houses | 2 |
| Ice Cream Licences | 78 |
| Licences to use premises for Manufacture of Preserved Foods | 5 |
| Licences to use premises under Rag Flock Act, 1951 | 3 |
| Dealers Licences to sell T.T. Milk | 5 |
| Dealers Licences to sell Pasteurised Milk | 9 |
| Dealers Licences to sell Sterilised Milk | 10 |
| Supplementary Licences to sell T.T. Milk | 5 |
| Supplementary Licences to sell Pasteurised Milk | 5 |
| Supplementary Licences to sell Sterilised Milk | 5 |

RODENT CONTROL.

This work is carried out successfully by one operator. The twice yearly treatment of sewers has been undertaken so as to qualify for grant aid.

The following additional operations have taken place and the cost of these operations has been recovered where applicable:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Prebaits laid | 1,124 |
| Poison baits laid | 2,626 |
| Bodies recovered | 404 |
| Estimated kill | 747 |
| Gassing operations | 2 |

## Summary of Work Done During Year

### Inspection of Premises.

| | |
|---|---|
| Where infectious disease has occurred | 12 |
| Inspections of Factories and Workshops | 54 |
| Inspections of Outworkers (Smedley's) | 95 |
| Inspections of Shops including Food Stores | 22 |
| Inspections of Caravans | 18 |
| Inspections of Slaughterhouses | 772 |
| Inspection of Licensed Premises | 1 |
| Inspection of Licensed houses Sanitary Accommodation | 1 |
| Inspections of Common Lodging Houses | 27 |
| Inspections under Housing Acts | 267 |
| Inspections under Public Health Acts | 284 |
| Inspections under Food and Drugs Acts | 116 |
| Inspections of Works in progress | 143 |
| Re-inspections as to compliance with notices | 187 |
| No. of premises disinfected after infectious disease | 8 |
| No. of premises treated for Vermin | 17 |
| Smoke Tests applied to drains | 2 |
| Water Tests applied to drains | 5 |
| No. of complaints investigated | 203 |
| Housing Applications | 24 |
| Rodent Control | 46 |
| Miscellaneous | 1 |

## Work Carried out Under Supervision or in Compliance with Notices

### Drainage.

| | |
|---|---|
| Drains repaired, cleansed, etc | 63 |
| New pipe drains provided | 12 |
| New pipe drains and gully provided | 1 |
| Dykes cleansed | 1 |
| Guttering renewed | 1 |
| Inspection chambers built on drains | 10 |
| Inspection chamber cover provided | 1 |
| Cesspools emptied | 10 |
| Connections to Sewer | 17 |
| New trapped gully | 1 |

### Sanitary Conveniences.

| | |
|---|---|
| Privies converted into water closets | 1 |
| New water closets provided | 9 |
| Closets repaired, cleansed, etc. | 10 |
| Flushing cisterns provided to W.C's. | 6 |
| Flushing cisterns repaired | 3 |

### Factories, Workshops and Bakehouses.

| | |
|---|---|
| Factories provided with sufficient Sanitary accommodation | 1 |
| Factories provided with improved Sanitary accommodation | 1 |

### Slaughterhouses.

| | |
|---|---|
| Cleansed, Limewashed, etc. | 1 |
| Repaired | 2 |

### Miscellaneous.

| | |
|---|---|
| Houses cleansed, limewashed, etc. | 2 |
| Houses repaired | 58 |
| Houses demolished | 6 |
| Standpipes repaired | 6 |
| Houses provided with new sinks | 1 |
| Accumulations of refuse removed | 5 |
| Dustbins provided | 7 |
| Piggeries abolished and new piggery built | 1 |
| Removal of animals improperly kept | 1 |

### General.

Steady progress has been made in matters coming within the purview of my department and the year has been good from a Public Health point of view. I again offer my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their assistance and guidance in matters that have been brought to their notice for special consideration and action.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, F.S.I.A.,
*Senior Sanitary Inspector.*

BRITISH MUSEUM
14 OCT 66